

HIFE CPP REQUIREMENTS:

- ◆ Must have a minimum of 2.5 GPA
- ◆ Must attend an accredited institution
- ◆ Must be willing to complete the assigned homework provided by the HIFE Coach

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Beginning Of The College Financial Planning Process



One of the most common mistake many students and parents make is assuming that they can't afford a college education. Don't be intimidated or discouraged by cost of college until you can determine how much financial aid is available to you. Since financial aid is comprised of grants, scholarships, student loans and work-study programs, it can significantly lower the cost of college to make it more affordable for many students.

The two factors that are used to determine the amount of student aid and who gets it

are: merit-based and need-based.

1. **Merit-based** – is given to students who excel in certain areas of academics, athletics, music, etc. It is also given to students who intends to have a career path in an area that will benefit their community, state or country (such as science, math, engineering or teaching).
2. **Need-based** – is given to students who can demonstrate the lack of

financial resources to pay for their college education.

In some instances, student financial aid programs uses both merit-based and need-based to determine the amount of eligibility given to the students.

The process all begins with the Free Application for Federal Student Aid or FAFSA. By completing the FAFSA, you can apply for student financial aid programs at different colleges from different levels of government (federal, state, county or city), institutional or private organizations. It is critical that the FAFSA be completed, reviewed and submitted as close to January 1st as possible. This will give you a better chance for qualifying for more assistance.

Message From The Dean - Bob Fulcomer

I want to first wish you a Happy New 2014 Year! Hope you had a wonderful celebration with your family.

As we begin 2014, January is very critical for many students who intend to go to college in

the upcoming Fall 2014 school year. This is the time when both parents and students need to prepare and submit their FAFSA application to their respected school. It is very important that you work with your HIFE Coach to determine the application

deadlines for each school that you are applying to in order to submit your applications in time. Now is the time to get your financial documents in order and start your college application process. Have a great year!



Federal Work Study Program

Many students who do not receive enough grants, scholarships or student loans to pay for their college cost can also apply for additional funding through the Federal Work Study Program (FWS Program), a key component of Financial Aid. The FWS Program provides students additional funding to assist with the college costs. More than 3,000 colleges and universities throughout the country participate in the FWS Program. FWS is available for many undergraduate and graduate students. The financial aid office from each school is responsible to

determine the amount of FWS needed for each student and this may vary from each school. Many work-study jobs available are either on-campus or off-campus and are related to certain college career or within the community service arena. The amount paid in the work-study jobs are usually at the federal minimum wage depending on each school. The financial aid department normally posts the different jobs available for you to apply for each semester which may range from a food server at a cafeteria, a receptionist at an administrative office, a library

assistant or a gym monitor. Most FWS limits the number of hours you can work to between 10-15 hours per week.

Your eligibility is based on your need as factored in when you complete your FAFSA application. Each school uses a standard formula to divide the amount each student is eligible for the Federal Work Study Program. The formula includes the parent's income and assets, the student's income and assets as well as the size of your family members attending the college.

Featured University - Rockland Community College



Rockland Community College is the only public higher education institution in Rockland County. It has served as an educational resource for Rockland since 1959, offering small classes, personal attention and caring faculty. In addition to the main campus in Suffern, the College operates an Extension Center in Haverstraw. Over 11,000 people are enrolled in credit and non-credit courses, and over 200,000 visit the campus each year for cultural, recreational and commercial events.

The Region

Located in the historic and scenic Hudson Valley only 25 miles northwest of New York City, picturesque Rockland offers the best of all worlds, including recreational and cultural attractions and easy access to the educational and artistic resources of the city.

Center for Personal & Professional Development
Several thousand people are

served by Continuing Education programs each year, including corporate and workforce training, personal development and programs for children and seniors.

Academics

The College offers 47 programs in the humanities, social sciences, arts, technologies, business, health professions, mathematics and sciences, including 39 associate's degrees and 8 one-year certificate programs.

Students

Enrollment of over 8,000 full- and part-time students includes 125 international students and 1,500 students over 30 years old.

Student Satisfaction

In a recent student opinion survey, 90% of students who responded said that RCC had met or exceeded their expectations.

Acclaimed Honors Program
The Sam Draper Mentored/
Talented Student (M/TS) Honors
Program is a nationally

acclaimed, rigorous academic program for liberal arts and business students seeking to transfer to premier colleges. Graduates transfer to such colleges as Harvard, Yale, Cornell, University of Pennsylvania and Smith. Approximately 300 students are currently enrolled in the Honors Program. The program was awarded a coveted FIPSE grant from the U.S. Department of Education to serve as a model for community college honors programs throughout the country.

Faculty

A distinguished faculty comprised of about 119 full-time and 400 part-time members includes numerous Fulbright Scholars, SUNY Chancellor's Award winners, published authors and artists. Average class size of 22 allows faculty members to work one-on-one with students.

Source: www.sunyrockland.edu

The 5 Fastest Ways To Repay Your College Loans

Getting out from under college loan debt

If there's one obstacle that prevents most millennials from investing either independently or with a financial adviser, it's the burden of college loans. These loans weigh down graduates, preventing them from seizing new financial opportunities until they clear their debt. In 2012, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York reported that the average outstanding student loan balance was \$24,301, with 10 percent of borrowers owing more than \$58,000.

So how can you get out from under that debt quickly? We spoke to investment managers and financial planners for their top tips to become free of that student loan. While they may be faster, some will definitely not be cheaper -- at least initially. But all are worthwhile in the end.

Treat the loan like a mortgage

If you can afford it, treat the loan like a mortgage and simply make larger payments to reduce the principal more quickly, says financial planner Allan Katz, CFP, president of Comprehensive Wealth Management Group in New York's Staten Island.

For example, a \$25,000 student loan with 6.8 percent interest with a 10-year payback period would cost \$288 a month. Paying \$700 a month instead of \$288 enables the borrower to repay the loan in just over three years, Katz says.

By doing this, borrowers are "paying the principal down more quickly, which results in lower interest charges," he says. By paying extra, the entire loan would cost \$28,000 rather than \$34,560.

Another strategy is adding payments and sending in checks every two weeks rather than monthly. Once that college loan is repaid, the benefits proliferate. "It's one less debt you owe. The money you make is now free to be invested and applied to owning a house, saving for retirement or putting a child through college," Katz says.

Create a 3- to 5-year plan

Clayton Shearer, a Certified Financial Planner at Wellness Financial Services in Thornton, Colo., urges clients to create a three- to five-year plan to pare down college debt. Knowing exactly when the loan ends is comforting for many clients. Clients "have a goal in place, they're committed to it and they know exactly what to pay monthly," Shearer says. Paying it becomes part of their monthly routine comparable to submitting checks for mortgages, cable TV and telephone.

For example, two clients had \$50,000 combined in college debt and were making around \$100,000 a year jointly. To pay it off, they established a budget and curtailed spending. Their budget was helped by two sizable bonuses from work, resulting in their sending \$800 per month for two years to cancel their college debt. Had

they not prepaid, it would have taken about 15 years to pay off the loan. The result, Shearer says, is clients "get debt-free and have a load lifted off their shoulder."

Establish your own college repayment fund

If a graduate can save an additional \$100, \$200 or more a month and deposit it into an account via automatic savings, it can expedite repayment. Having money moved automatically is effective because it's forced savings, Katz says. It enables people to set aside money to grow what otherwise would be spent on TVs or iPhones, Katz says. Just make sure to set up an account that will be used only for paying back your college debt. Don't use checking or savings accounts you already have because you might use that money for something other than your loan.

When you create the account, you can tie it to mutual funds, saving accounts, annuities and stocks that offer dividend reinvestment plans. The most effective way to ensure that the money saved multiplies is to let the money grow until it accumulates into a lump sum and then transfer it a chunk at a time to pay off the loan balance. "How long somebody must save depends on the returns they get, as well as the amount they are investing and how much they owe," he says. Of course, there's risk associated with savings in investments like mutual funds because the stock market is volatile and can falter.



HIFE



COLLEGE PLANNING PROGRAM



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The 5 Fastest Ways To Repay Your College Loans (cont.)

Typically over the span of a five-year or longer loan, stock market investments recover and grow, he says.

Start early with a part-time job in college

Earning money while attending college is one way to be proactive about keeping college debt in check, says Charles Sachs, a principal at Private Wealth Counsel in Miami. He says it's a win-win because "getting a paid position while still in school generates some money that offsets loans and builds invaluable industry specific knowledge."

If a student can manage to put away \$1,000 a month, "that's \$12,000 (a year) less in

student loans and not having to take that money out in loans -- a big savings," Shearer says.

Working part time while attending college can also strengthen a student's ability, Shearer says. It develops discipline, provides real-world experience and earns income to lower future debt obligations, he adds.

Avoid the usual traps

The most compelling obstacle preventing people from repaying loans faster is the need for "instant gratification," Shearer says. People can lose sight of their future financial goals, live for today, and "fall off the budgetary wagon," he

says. The most effective way to reduce debt is to plan ahead, make some sacrifices, focus on future financial goals and delay instant gratification.

Katz agrees. Maintaining financial discipline is a difficult hurdle for many people, he says. "Most people don't have the discipline to save. Most people spend like goldfish eat, which is nonstop," Katz says.

The people who succeed at reducing college debts are those who "live within their own means and are conscientious about saving," Katz says.

Source: *Gary M. Stern*
Bankrate.com

Coach's Corner: It's FAFSA Time!

January is the time of year when most students are applying to colleges and universities. However, the most important application to pay close attention to is the FAFSA (Free Application For Federal Student Aid).

FAFSA deadlines are set by federal and state agencies, as well as individual school financial aid offices, and often vary widely across the country. Certain schools have deadlines as early as the second or third week in January.

Applicants must pay attention to deadline specifics, as

some refer to the date by which individual FAFSAs must be submitted, while others refer to the date by which individual FAFSAs must be fully processed. Most students often mistakenly confuse the two and therefore do not meet the required deadlines.

FAFSA is used by aid providers to determine the amount of the student's Expected Family Contribution (EFC), which is the amount that they expect the student's family could contribute toward the student's college education.

FAFSA is often over 100 plus questions long and can cover

various areas from a student's family situation, to the student's educational background and experience, the student's prospective desired colleges, the student's finances, the student's employment, the student's parents' finances and much more. Whether or not parent financial information is required depends on whether or not the student is determined to still be a dependent of one of their parents.

Be sure to consult with your HIFE CPP Coach to get immediate assistance in completing the FAFSA.